

hunger and of exposure becomes more
apparent.
man has become more peaceful as his
civilization
has advanced.

Habit is the foundation of all that is
conserva-
tive in our ideas and conduct.
Representing
as it does a response to an impulse
of life.
its action affords happiness, and it is
accordingly
able to form inclinations out of
conduct or pur-
suits which have been forced upon us
by circum-
stances. In some of its forms
labour must
be naturally distasteful. But by
repetition
it may become a dominating passion.
We may
wonder how mankind can tolerate such
existences
as that of a fisherman afloat throughout
the winter
on the North Sea, or that of a miner or a
slaughterer.
But to those who earn their livelihood
in these
fashions their lives have become
habitual, and
are therefore not merely tolerable
but even
pleasant. So is society supplied with
willing
servants to minister in the utmost
hardship to
its luxuries. Habit—not a desire for
gain—is the
force which consolidates trades and
professions.
To those who first enter them they are
generally
not more attractive than is to young
children
attendance at church. On the other
hand habit
weakens the spontaneity to which we
are urged
by our impulse towards change, and
since it
reinforces itself by repetition, it tends
to become
the more powerful of the two,

especially in adult
life. If accepted undeviatingly as a
guide of
conduct it may render us altogether
incapable of
independent thought or action. We
may see
this tendency very clearly in the effects
of such a
habitual routine as is imposed by
military discipline. It is notorious that soldiers
who return
to civil life are deficient in
resourcefulness, and it